A LITERATURE REVIEW OF DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES TO BUILD BRAND AWARENESS FOR CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL FLASHCARDS BUSINESS THROUGH INSTAGRAM: A CASE STUDY OF FLASHY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to analyze the digital marketing strategy carried out by Flashy, a business engaged in children's educational flashcards, in building brand awareness on Instagram. The background that becomes the reference for this research is the difficulty of small business groups to use social media in times of intense business competition. This research is a qualitative type with a content analysis method where data is taken from Flashy's Instagram account (@by.flashy) such as posts, interactions, and utilization of Instagram features themselves. The data taken is divided into two categories, namely primary and secondary data in the form of literature according to the content. From the research results, it can be concluded that product promotion content is most effective in attracting audience attention, while educational content is crucial in the formation of brand loyalty. Inconsistent posting is correlated with low levels of audience engagement, while exposure of content using the Reels feature provides a wider reach. Therefore, in conclusion, it has been established that Flashy's digital marketing strategy is quite effective, while inconsistent posting frequency and speed of responding to the audience are prioritized. As a practical recommendation for further research, it can be suggested to explore more innovative instruments in using Instagram features and expand responsive interaction strategies.

Keywords: Small Business, Brand Awareness, Flashcards, Instagram, Digital Marketing Strategy

INTRODUCTION

Social media has completely changed how companies advertise their goods (Naik et al., 2024). Businesses have a lot of opportunity to communicate with customers directly and create emotional bonds with visual content on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok (Alhabash et al., 2024). Instagram is the most widely used and successful tool for increasing brand recognition among these (Maitri & Ridanasti, 2024). Providing new micro businesses with many opportunities to promote their products to a wider audience (Marhamah & Sitorus, 2024). Although many firms exist on social media, not all are able to take full advantage of it (Rahmah & Rochmaniah, 2024).

It's difficult to use social media effectively, especially for small businesses that lack the means and expertise to create digital marketing plans (Gumede et al., 2024). These constraints make it challenging for small businesses to produce engaging and trustworthy content, and consequently prevents them from competing with larger brands (Nofela & Belgiawan, 2024). Another challenge is brand recognition due to the fierce competition and the nature of content competition from rivals on social network platforms such as Instagram (Resty et al., 2023). Most small business content does not reach its audience because of no idea about Instagram algorithm (Saima et al., 2023). A strategic approach towards Digital Marketing is vital to capture audience interest and develop client loyalty at an early stage (Muharam et al., 2024).

The education sector has unique dynamics of digital marketing methods; as most of the audience is parents searching for educational solutions for their kids (Bungai et al., 2024). This means that flashcards, as a medium of teaching, becoming an interactive form of early childhood education has a lot of benefits (Solissa et al., 2023). Instagram as a marketing platform gives small businesses the chance to highlight the value that their products offer through captivating visual material (Thomas & Verma, 2023). Small firms can develop more compelling narratives to draw in their audience by utilizing features like stories and reels (Musthofa & Istiyanto, 2024).

Instagram is relatively good for building brand awareness, based on previous studies, but most of these focus on large companies with a lot of resources (Marchand et al., 2018). While the market characteristics are distinctive and require specific techniques, there is a scarcity of literature on small businesses in the children's education field (Ramadita & Belgiawan, 2023). Early childhood education tool e. Confirm that the edge of using flashcards works to attract the audience with eye-catching visual information (Sabgini et al., 2024). Due to a lack of research in this dimension, investigating how small businesses like flashcards that sell educational products can strategically enhance their presence on Instagram to build brand awareness amidst the competition is essential (Basudev & Pritam, 2019).

Starting a new business that offers educational flashcards like Flashy would mean the company will have difficulty leveraging Instagram as its primary marketing force owing to having a small following and stiff competition in the market for children's educational products. Flashy, a new venture, offers educational flashcards of alphabets, fruits, veggies,

and animals. As a small business, it has to figure out the ins and outs of digital marketing while being up against more established brands. This research intends to investigate the digital marketing implementation that took place within Flashy, in creating brand awareness through Instagram. Furthermore, this research would also offer practical contributions to different small businesses to strategically utilize their digital marketing strategies more effectively to be more competitive on a more and more specialized digital market platform.

RESEARCH METHODS

A qualitative method approach is used in this study. Qualitative approaches aim deeply at social phenomena and human behavior through descriptive and narrative data analysis (Spencer & Nelson, 2024). This method is very relevant to analyze the digital marketing strategies utilized by Flashy in increasing brand awareness through Instagram. The types of data used in this study are primary and secondary data.

The primary data is collected through content analysis of Flashy's Instagram account (@by.flashy). This analysis aims to identify elements that contribute to brand awareness. Additionally, the secondary data is gathered from literature related to digital marketing, social media, and brand awareness to support the analysis and understanding of observed phenomena. Once data is collected, the data is then analyzed to identify patterns that demonstrate the effectiveness of the digital marketing strategies employed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Instagram is the main platform used by Flashy, a business that sells educational flashcards for kids to reach its target audiences and increase brand awareness. Flashy aims to connect with young parents who prioritize their children's education with interactive features and visually appealing posts.

Figure 1. Flashy's Instagram Profile
Source : Instagram account @by.flasy

Flashy currently has 34 followers and has posted 9 uploads on Instagram. This Instagram account is categorized as Product/Service highlighting its role as an educational product provider. Flashy's account bio includes a short tagline, "Belajar secepat Flash dengan

Flashy" (Learn as fast as Flash with Flashy), emphasizing its focus on fun and interactive learning tools for kids. The fact that the business is based in Bogor, Indonesia, suggesting that its primary market is local. Flashy also encourages engagement with its audience through Direct Messages (DM) to answer questions, take orders, or collaborate. This profile demonstrates Flashy's efforts to capture the attention of its target audience and build brand awareness.

Observations and analysis identify several key areas of interest. Researchers refer to the theory of brand awareness proposed by Anand (2023) which includes the following factors:

1. Types of Content Posted

Flashy posts various types of content on Instagram to build brand awareness and attract audience attention. The three main types of content frequently posted are educational content, product promotions, and greetings for special occasions.

Figure 2. Types of Content Posted by Flashy
Source : Instagram account @by.flasy

The primary type of content most frequently posted by Flashy is product promotional content aimed at introducing products and encouraging purchases. This type of content garners the most views and likes, making it the most effective at attracting audience attention. On the other hand, educational content also performs well, although its interaction rate is lower than promotional content. Flashy shares posts with the theme "Tahukah Kamu?" (Did You Know?), providing information about the benefits of flashcards for children's development and usage. Additionally, Flashy posts greetings for

occasions such as Children's Day to strengthen connections with the audience during special moments. Although this content is not directly related to the products being sold, it helps foster emotional engagement with the audience.

2. Posting Frequency

Posting frequency is very important to maintain brand awareness and increase audience engagement. Flashy post content two to three times a week, but sometimes there are periods of more than a week without any new posts. This affects the level of engagement on the content uploaded after such a long gap. Based on the analysis, long periods without posting were associated with a decreased engagement with an average 20% decrease in likes and views in the week following period.

According to A & Felisiya (2024) maintaining a consistent posting schedule is key to keeping audience engagement on social media. The more frequently an account posts, the better the audience connects with the brand (Robson & Banerjee, 2023). Therefore, consistency in posting frequency needs to be considered by Flashy to maintain stable interaction and increase brand awareness.

3. Utilization of Instagram Features

Flashy uses Instagram Stories and Reels to reach more audiences. Stories are used for sharing short updates such as pre-order reminders, fun quizzes, and quick promotions. Meanwhile, Reels is used to upload more interactive videos, such as showcasing Flashy's original products. By using Reels, Flashy can display their products live and capture the audience's attention in a more engaging way.

The analysis shows that Reels featuring actual products achieve higher engagement rates compared to regular feed posts. This feature proves to be more effective in capturing audience attention, as Instagram tends to promote short videos through the explore page and content distribution algorithm. This finding aligns with previous studies showing that short videos are preferred by Instagram audiences and tend to spread more widely than static images (Liang & Wolfe, 2022).

4. Interactions with Followers

Interacting with followers is essential for building loyalty and personal connections with the audience. Flashy actively responds to direct messages (DMs) from followers, helping to create a more personal relationship. Although not all posts receive comments, communication through DMs remains effective for closer engagement with the audience. This interaction also increases trust in the brand and strengthens brand loyalty. However, delayed responses during certain times, such as weekends or busy hours can impact audience satisfaction.

A study by Ziano & Wang (2021) highlights that response speed is a critical factor for maintaining good relationships and increasing engagement. Faster response times strengthen personal connections with the audience and enhance their satisfaction (Yaneva, 2022). Therefore, Flashy needs to improve response times for direct messages,

especially during busy hours to maintain stronger long-term relationships with its audience.

The analysis shows that Flashy's digital marketing strategy on Instagram is quite successful, although there is room for improvement. Content that promotes products is the most effective in catching audience attention. However, educational content also plays an important role in building brand loyalty. One of the advantages that can be further enhanced to reach a larger audience is the use of Reels feature.

To avoid a drop in engagement, Flashy must be consistent in posting content. Maintaining a close relationship with the audience also requires improving the speed of responses in Direct Messages (DMs). Although Flashy's marketing strategy generally complies with the principles of digital marketing on social media, it may be more successful with adjustment to consistency and responsiveness.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings indicate that while there is certainly room for improvement, Flashy's use of Instagram as part of its digital marketing strategy has made a positive impact in building brand awareness. This is demonstrated by the growth in followers, increased engagement rates (likes, comments, shares), and expanded audience reach. Product promotional content proves to be one of the most successful ways to attract audience attention, while educational content plays a significant role in increasing brand loyalty. Because the short video format is eye-catching and in line with Instagram algorithm, using the Reel feature can improve the audience engagement. However, inconsistency in posting frequency and slow response to direct messages (DMs) might lower audience engagement. Therefore, consistency in uploading content and increased speed of response to audience interactions need to be optimized to maintain stronger relationships. Practically, this study recommends that small businesses like Flashy improve the consistency of posting schedules and maximize Instagram features to reach a wider audience. Theoretically, this study contributes to the digital marketing literature in the education sector, particularly in small businesses that utilize social media as the main platform. Future research could explore the use of new features or other innovative approaches to improve digital marketing effectiveness.

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